

In the Claims

Please cancel claims 1-6.

Please add new claims 7-26 as follows (for the Examiner's convenience, all of the claims pending after entry of this Amendment are presented below):

7. **(New)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:11.

8. **(New)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a fragment of the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:11, wherein the fragment comprises at least 10 nucleotides.

9. **(New)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1.

10. **(New)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule which encodes a naturally occurring allelic variant of a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1.

11. **(New)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule which encodes a fragment of a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the fragment comprises at least 5 contiguous amino acid residues of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

12. **(New)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule which hybridizes to the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11 under stringent conditions.

13. **(New)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence which is complementary to the nucleotide sequence of the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11.

heterologous polypeptide

15. **(New)** An isolated nucleic acid molecule of claims 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11, wherein said nucleic acid molecule is operably linked to at least one expression control sequence.

16. **(New)** A process for producing a protein encoded by the nucleic acid molecule of claim 15, which comprises:

- (a) growing a culture of a host cell transformed with a vector comprising the polynucleotide of claim 15 in a suitable culture medium; and
- (b) purifying said protein from the culture.

17. **(New)** A vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 7, 8, 9, 10, or 11.

18. **(New)** The vector of claim 17, which is an expression vector.

19. **(New)** A host cell transfected with the expression vector of claim 17.

20. **(New)** An isolated polypeptide selected from the group consisting of:

- a) a fragment of a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the fragment comprises at least 5 contiguous amino acids of SEQ ID NO:1; and
- b) a naturally occurring allelic variant of a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the polypeptide is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule which hybridizes to a nucleic acid molecule consisting of SEQ ID NO:11 under stringent conditions.

21. **(New)** The polypeptide of claim 20 comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

22. **(New)** The polypeptide of claim 21, further comprising heterologous amino acid sequences.